# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:21
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2002
TELECOM RACKET
MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL;VSM (RETD.) COL. CHOUDHARY

**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) whether attention of the Government have been drawn to the news-item captioned `Telecom Racket busted` appearing in the Hindustan Times dated September 18, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether many persons have been found involved in making S.T.D./I.S.D. telephone calls through unscrupulous means resulting in revenue loss of crores of rupees;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the number of persons arrested by the Government in this regard during the last year and this year till date alongwith those against whom action has been taken?

## Answer

THE MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PI MAHAJAN)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN REPSECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STA QUESTION NO. 21 FOR 20TH NOVEMBER, 2002 REGARDING TELECOM RACKET.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s World Callnet (Cleartel as brand name) was advertising and selling pre-paid STD/ISD cards to telephone customers in and around Delhi, in the garb of Virtual Calling Card (VCC) without licence. The STD/ISD calls made from MTNL/BSNL customers wer being routed through the telephone lines obtained by Cleartel from M/s Bhrati Telenet (Touchtel) at Gurgaon. Thus the STD/ISD calls originated by MTNL/BSNL customers using these prepaid cards were being converted into the originating calls of Bharti Telenet (Touchtel) by such arrangements. Due to this MTNL/BSNL were being deprived of their legitimate revenue for the STD/ISD calls.

(c) From 1st January, 2001, 75 cases involving private firms/persons have been detected for illegal routing of incoming international calls resulting in notional loss to service providers. Besides 32 other cases of misuse of STD/ISD involving at least 67 persons have also been reported. The loss suffered by BSNL/MTNL in 16 of these cases is estimated to around Rs. 1.52 crores and in the remaining cases, the loss could not be assessed.

(d) Government takes suitable action including raids with the help of CBI/Police for stopping illegal routing of traffic. In the case mentioned at (b) above the matter was reported to Police. One person was arrested and illegal operation was stopped. Important preventive measures taken by Government are:

(i) Dedicated CBI cells have been created in four metros exclusively for detecting and checking telecom related frauds.

(ii) A close coordination between service providers and investigating agencies is maintained to book the offenders.

(iii) Checks in telephone exchanges have been intensified.

(e) 51 persons were arrested in this regard since 1st January, 2001 and action has been initiated against them by CBI/Police.